



## Keeping Kids Safe

Would your child know what to do if the babysitter wanted to play a “secret game that no one would know about?” Would he or she know where to get help if something frightening happened and you weren’t around?

Parents can take positive actions to protect their children and help them learn how to respond to threatening situations.

- ◆ Walk your neighborhood with your children. Show them safe places they can go in an emergency, like a neighbor’s house, a McGruff Safe House, or an open store. Make sure they are taking the safest route to school.
- ◆ Check your neighborhood for areas that threaten children’s safety – brush in wooded areas, high shrubbery, abandoned buildings, bad lighting.
- ◆ Rehearse with children their full name, address, and phone number (including area code) and how to make emergency phone calls from home and public phone booths.
- ◆ Make certain children are alone or isolated as little as possible. Encourage them to walk and play with friends and stay in well-lighted, open areas where others can see them.
- ◆ If you must ever leave a child at home alone, leave a number where you or a neighbor can be reached.
- ◆ Thoroughly check the background of babysitters and day care personnel.
- ◆ Teach your children that no one – even someone they know – has the right to touch them in a way that makes them feel uncomfortable. Tell them they can and should share any such experiences with you.
- ◆ **LISTEN CAREFULLY TO YOUR CHILDREN.** Let them know they can talk to you about anything and you will always love them and want them to be with you.